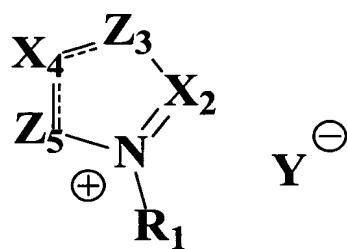


**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A multilayer film comprising a substrate bearing an aligned, fixed liquid crystal layer wherein the aligned liquid crystal layer contains an azonium salt represented by formula (I):



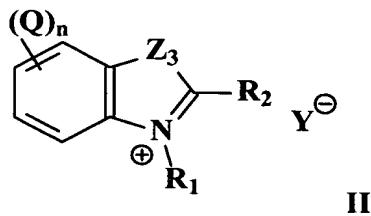
wherein

the subscripts represent the ring positions and each X is independently N or C-R;  
each Z is independently N, N-R, C-(R)(R), O, S, SO<sub>2</sub>, SO, C=O, C=S, or C=NR;  
each R group is independently hydrogen or a substituent; and  
Y is a charge balancing anion, which may be a separate moiety or part of an X, Z, or R;  
provided two or more X, Z and R groups may form a phenyl, naphthyl, pyrizinyl, pyridyl, quinolinyl, cyclohexenyl, oxazolyl, or pyrazolyl ring;

provided the salt may be part of an oligomer or polymer. [[.]]

2. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein each X is C-R.
3. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein Z<sub>3</sub> is S or N-R.
4. (original) The film of claim 2 wherein Z<sub>3</sub> is S or N-R.
5. (original) The film of claim 2 wherein Z<sub>3</sub> is S.

6. (original) The film of claim 2 wherein  $Z_3$  is N-R.
7. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein  $X_2$  is C-R<sub>2</sub> wherein R<sub>2</sub> is H or a methyl group.
8. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein  $X_4$  and  $Z_5$  join to form a ring.
9. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein the ring is a phenyl ring.
10. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein the ring is a cyclohexenyl ring.
11. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein  $X_4$  and  $Z_5$  are both C-R groups.
12. (original) The film of claim 11 wherein both R<sub>4</sub> and R<sub>5</sub> are H, alkyl, alkoxy, or aryl groups.
13. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein the compound of formula (I) is a bis compound joined at the 1 position.
14. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein Y is an anion selected from the group consisting of BF<sub>4</sub>, PF<sub>6</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>CO<sub>2</sub>, Br, Cl, COO, SO<sub>3</sub>, and CH<sub>3</sub>SO<sub>3</sub>.
15. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein the azonium salt is present in an amount of at least 0.1 wt% of the layer.
16. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein the azonium salt is present in an amount of at least 0.1-10 wt% of the layer.
17. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein the azonium salt is present in an amount of at least 0.25-5 wt% of the layer.
18. (original) The film of claim 1 wherein the azonium salt is a benzazolium represented by formula (II):



wherein

the subscripts represent the ring positions;

$Z_3$  is N, N-R, C-(R)(R), O, S,  $SO_2$ , SO, C=O, C=S, or C=NR;

each R group is independently hydrogen or a substituent;

Y is a charge balancing anion, which may be a separate moiety or part of the azonium; and

each Q independently represents a substituent and n is an integer from 0 to 4.

19. (original) The film of claim 18 wherein, Z is N-R, O, or S where R is H or a substituent.

20. (original) The film of claim 18 wherein the azonium salt is present in an amount of at least 0.1 wt% of the layer.

21. (original) The film of claim 18 wherein the azonium salt is present in an amount of at least 0.1-10 wt% of the layer.

22. (original) The film of claim 18 wherein the azonium salt is present in an amount of at least 0.25-5 wt% of the layer.

23. (original) A process for imparting an increased tilt angle to a polymeric liquid crystal layer upon curing comprising including in that layer an azonium salt compound according to claim 1 prior to curing.

24. (original) A process for imparting an increased tilt angle to a polymeric liquid crystal layer upon curing comprising including in that layer an azonium salt compound according to claim 18 prior to curing.

25. (New) A compensator comprising the film of claim 1.

26. (New) An optical device comprising the film of claim 1.

27. (New) A liquid crystal display comprising the film of claim 1.